

HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISORY

Maine Department of Health Human Services
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CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING WARNING

The Maine Center for Disease Control (Maine CDC, formerly Bureau of Health), warns Maine citizens to be very careful using gas-powered generators, kerosene heaters or other heating or power sources during power outages. If not used safely, they can cause carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas formed when burning most types of fuels. Using gas-powered generators, kerosene heaters, charcoal grills, and gas grills can cause poisoning if CO gas builds-up in closed in spaces. Warning signs of CO poisoning are flu symptoms like headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, drowsiness, and confusion, but without a fever. Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause coma and death. Every year, more than 200 people die in the U.S. due to CO poisoning.

How To Prevent CO Poisoning During Power Outages:

- ✓ **Place** generator outdoors in the fresh air. Keep it away from windows or doors. Do not put a generator in a closed or partly closed space, like a basement, cellar bulkhead, or attached garage. Carbon monoxide can build up to dangerous levels in these spaces.
- ✓ **Use** kerosene heaters in a well ventilated room. Keep doors to other rooms open or keep a window open at least 1 inch. Use only K-1 grade fuel in kerosene heaters. Read the directions for setting the wick height.
- ✓ **Do not use** outdoor cooking devices indoors like gas or charcoal grills, gas camp stoves.
- ✓ **Do not use** gas appliances like ranges, ovens, or clothes dryers for heating your home.
- ✓ **Always turn off** your vehicle in a garage.
- ✓ **Place** a carbon monoxide detector that is battery powered (or has battery back-up power) in the hallway outside each sleeping area. Be sure Underwriters Laboratory certifies the CO detector. Look for the UL mark with the "Single Station Carbon Monoxide Alarm" statement. CO detectors are in most stores.

If You Suspect CO Poisoning:

If you or anyone in the home thinks you are being poisoned by carbon monoxide

- ✓ Leave the house at once.
- ✓ Call the fire department or 911.
- ✓ Get medical attention. Call the Poison Center (1-800-222-1222) or your doctor **after** you leave the house.
- ✓ Do not go back into the building until the fire department tells you it is safe.

CONTACTS:

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Local Fire Department

Northern New England Poison Center
1-800-222-1222